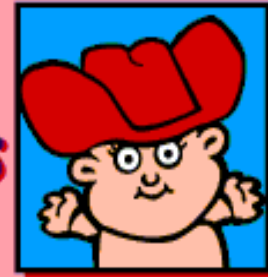




*** Tips For *** **Nursing Mothers**



Plugged Duct and Mastitis

Some moms breastfeed without having a single problem. Others may have a plugged duct or mastitis. These problems can be treated so you can continue nursing in comfort. If you feel any pain when nursing, first give yourself a breastfeeding check-up:



1. Check the way you hold the baby for nursing:

- U Is baby's body close to your body with his mouth at your nipple?
- U Are baby's ear, shoulder, and hip in a straight line?
- U Is baby supported and are you comfortable?



2. Check baby's latch-on:

- U Does baby keep entire nipple and about one inch of the areola (dark area) in his mouth while nursing?
- U Does baby's nose and chin touch your breast?
- U Are baby's lips flanged (flipped out not tucked in)?
- U Do baby's ears wiggle and cheeks look full when he nurses?
- U Is baby's tongue laying over his lower

gum when he nurses?

3. Check for milk transfer (milk moving out of the breast and into the baby):

- U Do you hear baby swallowing?
- U Do you see milk dripping from your other breast?



4. Check the beginning and ending of the feed:

- U Do you feed baby when he shows early hunger cues (sucking on fist, sucking his lips, rooting) rather than waiting for a late hunger cue (crying)?
- U Does baby open his mouth wide to latch on?
- U Do you break suction before taking baby off your breast?
- U Do you keep your nipples dry between feedings?

Plugged Duct

Breastmilk travels to the nipple by way of ducts. Sometimes a duct or two can get clogged. If the clog doesn't break loose, the duct stays plugged. If you have a plugged duct, you might feel tenderness and/or a lump near the plug. Missing a feeding, changing your normal nursing position, and wearing a tight bra, baby sling, shoulder bag, or clothes are common

causes of a plugged duct.

To help unclog the plug:

- Keep **BREASTFEEDING**.
- Try different ways of holding your baby or nursing - point baby's nose toward the plug when nursing.
- Gently massage the plug before and during a feeding.
- A warm compress on the plug may also help.

If the plugged duct doesn't go away within a couple of days, visit a lactation consultant or a doctor. Untreated plugged ducts can lead to an infection (mastitis). Also see a doctor if the same duct keeps getting plugged.

Mastitis

Mastitis is a breast infection. The infection is caused when milk is not readily removed from the breast. When the milk sits in the breast, it is more likely to be invaded by bacteria. Common causes of mastitis are having an untreated cracked nipple, plugged duct, or engorgement, or changing baby's nursing schedule. Mastitis makes mom suddenly feel tired and flu-like with a fever, chills, headache and/or muscle aches. The infected area of the breast may be tender and warm to the touch and have reddish streaks.

To treat mastitis:

- Keep **BREASTFEEDING**. Your milk is still safe and healthy for your baby. Nursing helps fight the infection by removing milk so less bacteria can grow.
- Visit your doctor. Take the entire dose of antibiotics even if you begin to feel better.

- Rest often. Sleep when your baby is sleeping.
- Eat well and drink more fluids to help you fight off the infection.
- Use warm compresses and cold packs on the infected area. Warm compresses (warm, damp cloth) soothe the pain. Cold packs (a bag of ice or frozen peas wrapped in a towel) relieve swelling.

It's important to treat mastitis right away. If the infection is not treated, it could develop into an abscess (infected area filled with pus). An abscess is painful and will need to be lanced (pierced open to drain the pus).

There are many people who want to help you comfortably and safely continue to breastfeed. Don't let plugged ducts or mastitis scare you away from breastfeeding; many moms breastfeed without ever getting either one. However, if you think you have a plugged duct or mastitis, get help by calling your local:

WIC Breastfeeding Counselor:

Lactation Consultant:

La Leche League Leader:

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